

Standing Orders

Agreed at Board Meeting 9 September 2021

Reviewed at Board Meeting on 17 October 2024
Standing Orders remain unchanged



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LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF MEETINGS OF THE BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEES

In accordance with paragraph 10 of Schedule 1 of The Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 the following Standing Orders for the conduct of the business of the Northern Ireland Library Authority (known as “Libraries NI” and hereinafter referred to as “the Board”) and committees thereof, were made by the Board at a meeting held on 10 February 2011. In these Standing Orders “the relevant Department” means the Department for Communities.

1. MEETINGS

1.1 Frequency of ordinary meetings

Meetings of the Board shall be held at least six times each year at such places, dates and times as shall be determined by the Board.

1.2 Special meetings

The Chief Executive shall call a special meeting of the Board or of any of its committees if so requested in writing by the Chairperson or on receipt of a requisition for such a meeting signed by not less than a quorum of Members. The written request or requisition must state the business to be transacted at the special meeting and must be delivered in writing to the office of the Chief Executive not less than ten working days before the date of the special meeting. No business shall be transacted at the special meeting other than that specified in the notice.

1.3 Notice and Summons of meetings

Five working days at least before a meeting of the Board the Chief Executive shall -

- a. publish at the offices of the Board a notice of the time and place of the intended meeting. Such notice shall specify the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting (in these Standing Orders referred to as the Agenda); and
- b. issue to each Member:
 - a notice convening the meeting, giving its time and place and where the meeting has been called at the request of Members, the notice shall in addition specify the names of those Members;
 - the Agenda for the meeting; and
 - relevant reports and other documents referred to in, or to be read with, the Agenda (however any report or document, a copy of which cannot for good reasons be circulated with the Agenda, may nevertheless be considered at the meeting with the prior approval of the Chairperson).

If due notice of any meeting(s) or any Agenda, or reports or documents referred to in, or to be read with, the Agenda, are not issued to any Member, those omissions shall not affect the validity of the relevant meeting or any subsequent meeting.

1.4 Adjournment of meetings

The Board may adjourn any meeting to any other time or any other place.

An adjourned meeting shall be deemed a continuation of the original meeting and no business shall be transacted at the adjourned meeting other than that included on the Agenda for the original meeting.

If a meeting is adjourned without fixing a date and time for the continuation of that meeting any business left unfinished shall be postponed until the next ordinary meeting of the Board.

1.5 Record of Attendances at Meetings

The names of the Members and officers present at a meeting of the Board and its Committees shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. After non-attendance at more than three consecutive meetings of the Board or a Committee, of which he / she is a Member, whether or not an apology is recorded, the Chairperson may invite the Board Member to consider whether he / she wishes to continue with his / her Board membership. Persistent non-attendance at meetings may lead to the Chairperson consulting with the Department and the Minister responsible as to whether the appointment should be terminated.

1.6 Chairperson of Meeting

At a meeting of the Board the Chairperson of the Board, if present, shall preside. If the Chairperson of the Board is absent from a meeting of the Board the Vice-Chairperson, if present, shall preside.

If both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of the Board are absent from a meeting of the Board, the Chairperson for that meeting shall be elected from the Board Members present at the meeting.

1.7 Commencement of business

The business of any meeting shall proceed immediately upon a quorum being formed and the chair being taken once the appointed starting time for the meeting has been reached.

1.8 Responsibilities of the Chairperson

The Chairperson, or in his/her absence the Vice Chairperson, or in his/her absence the Chairperson elected to preside at that meeting shall decide all questions of order, relevancy and competency arising at the meeting.

1.9 Means of participation in Meetings

The Board can determine that Members and Officers may attend and participate in meetings by:

- a. attendance at a physical meeting; [or]
- b. simultaneous attendance and participation at a secondary meeting place; and/or
- c. using an Electronic Platform.

Details of any physical meeting place, Secondary Meeting Place and/or Electronic Platform shall be stated in a notice of the meeting given under the provision of paragraph 1.3., which shall also set out details of the Electronic Platform for the meeting (and any access arrangements for such Electronic Platform shall be communicated to Members, either in the notice or otherwise).

Any persons wishing to attend a meeting (whether at any principal physical meeting place or any Secondary Meeting Place, or by using an Electronic Platform) shall be required to comply with any identification procedures and security arrangements as the Board shall reasonably specify from time to time.

1.10 Participation in Meetings by using an Electronic Platform

Any Member attending a Board meeting and/or participating in the business of the meeting by using an Electronic Platform who is unable to do so in the course of the meeting [whether as a result of any technical difficulties in relation to such Electronic Platform or otherwise), shall not invalidate the proceedings at that meeting.

2. QUORUM

2.1 The quorum of the Board or its committees shall be one-third of the total number of appointed Members, with the proviso that a minimum of three members shall be present.

2.2 If during any meeting of the Board or its committees, the Chairperson, after counting the number of Members present, declares that a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned, in which case the provision of paragraph 1.4. will apply.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON / VICE CHAIRPERSON

3.1 The Chairperson of the Board is appointed by the Minister of the relevant Department following a public recruitment process.

3.2 The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting of the Board held after all Members have been appointed and at any Board meeting thereafter should a vacancy occur.

4. ORDER OF BUSINESS

4.1 Unless otherwise decided by the presiding Chairperson, the business of the meeting shall follow the order specified in the agenda.

- 4.2 It shall be a matter for the presiding Chairperson to determine whether to accept for discussion at a meeting of the Board or its committees any other business, not detailed on the agenda or notified to the Chief Executive at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. In the event that the Chairperson decides that the matter should not be discussed at that meeting, the item of business may be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Board or referred to a relevant committee.

5. MINUTES

- 5.1 The minutes of the proceedings at a meeting of the Board shall be drawn up and entered in a permanent record kept for that purpose and shall be submitted for approval at the next ensuing meeting of the Board.
- 5.2 No discussion shall take place upon the minutes except in relation to their accuracy or where the Chairperson considers discussion appropriate. Any amendment to the minutes shall be agreed and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.
- 5.3 Approved minutes shall be deemed to be a true record of the meeting to which they relate and they shall be signed by the person presiding at the meeting at which they were approved.

6. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

- 6.1 Any Member who wishes to have a motion considered at a meeting of the Board shall give notice in writing to the Chairperson and Chief Executive at least 10 working days before the next meeting of the Board. The notice shall record the motion that the Member wishes to have considered and shall be signed by the Member concerned.
- 6.2 The Chief Executive shall set out in the Agenda for every meeting of the Board all motions of which notice has been duly given in accordance with paragraph 6.1.
- 6.3 If the Member who required that such a motion be considered by the Board is not present to speak to the Agenda item, it shall, unless postponed by consent of the Board, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be considered without fresh notice having been given in accordance with paragraph 6.1.
- 6.4 Every motion shall be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Board has powers or duties and which directly affects the provision of services for which the Board is responsible.
- 6.5 If the subject matter of any motion of which notice has been duly given comes within the province of any committee or committees of the Board it shall, upon being moved and seconded stand referred without discussion to such committee or committees for discussion and report. However, the Chairperson may, if he/she considers it convenient and conducive to the despatch of business and with the consent of the majority of Members present allow the motion to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was brought forward.

- 6.6 A motion may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of a seconder and of the Board and no Member may speak to it after the mover has asked permission for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.
- 6.7 Where a Member wishes to raise a matter not on the agenda of a Board meeting the Member shall notify the Chairperson of the Board and the Chief Executive at least 24 hours before the meeting. It shall be a matter for the Chairperson to use his/her discretion as to whether to include the additional item on the agenda.
- 6.8 Notwithstanding paragraph 6.4 above, if a Member is of the view that it is his/her duty in the public interest to raise any question affecting the policies, procedures, reputation, integrity or impartiality of Libraries NI he/she should do so promptly with the Chairperson, the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Chief Executive or another senior manager of Libraries NI, or with the relevant Department.

7. RULES OF DEBATE

- 7.1 A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been duly proposed and seconded. The Chairperson may request that the motion or amendment is put in writing before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- 7.2 Any Member proposing, seconding or speaking to a motion or an amendment must direct his/her speech to the motion or amendment or to a personal explanation or a point of order.
- 7.3 A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by a Member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate.
- 7.4 A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a Standing Order or statutory provision, in which case the Member shall specify the Standing Order or statutory provision in question and state the way in which it is considered to have been broken.
- 7.5 The ruling of the Chairperson on the admissibility of a personal explanation or point of order shall not be open to discussion.
- 7.6 An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be:
- a. to refer a subject of debate to a committee for consideration; or
 - b. to leave out words; or
 - c. to leave out words and insert or add others; or
 - d. to insert or add words;
 - e. but such omission, insertion or addition of words shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Board.
- 7.7 The mover of a motion shall have the right of reply at the close of the debate before the motion is put to the vote. If an amendment is moved the mover of the original motion shall also have the right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment. The mover of the amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on the amendment.

- 7.8 When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
- a. to amend the motion;
 - b. to adjourn the meeting;
 - c. to adjourn the debate;
 - d. that the question be now put;
 - e. to move to the next business.
- 7.9 Only one amendment shall be moved and discussed at a time and no further amendments shall be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of. If an amendment is lost other amendments may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 7.10 All amendments must be disposed of before the original motion or the motion as amended is put to the meeting.
- 7.11 A motion for a direct negative to the question shall not be permitted, but at the conclusion of the debate the question shall be put and resolved in the affirmative or the negative.

8. RESCISSION OF A PRECEDING RESOLUTION

- 8.1 No motion to rescind any resolution passed by the Board within the preceding six months and no motion or amendment to the same effect as one which has been rejected in the preceding six months shall be proposed by a Member of the Board unless notice is given to the Chief Executive in writing at least ten days before the next meeting of the Board and is signed by at least one third of the Members of the Board.
- 8.2 When any such motion or amendment has been disposed of by the Board it shall not be open to any Member to propose the same or a similar motion or amendment within a further period of six months.
- 8.3 Any resolution passed by a committee or sub-committee of the Board shall be deemed to be a resolution of the Board when the minutes of that committee or sub-committee have been adopted by the Board.

9. DEPUTATIONS

- 9.1 A deputation may not be admitted to a meeting of the Board or a committee thereof unless the Chief Executive has received ten working days previous notice in writing of the intended deputation and the object and composition thereof. If the Chief Executive receives such notice he/she shall consult with the Chairperson of the Board, and where appropriate, the Chairperson of the relevant committee, as to whether to authorise the attendance of the deputation at the forthcoming meeting of the Board or the committee or to ask the Board or committee to make a decision.

- 9.2 No deputation shall consist of more than 3 people. The privilege of a deputation shall be confined to the presentation of a memorial, a statement or copies of resolutions and the making of not more than 2 speeches by members of the deputation. The total duration of the deputation shall not exceed ten minutes.
- 9.3 Members may ask questions of the deputation party for clarification purposes only but shall not enter into debate with them regarding the subject of the deputation. Members shall not debate the subject of the deputation with fellow Members until the deputation has left the meeting.
- 9.4 No deputation shall appear before the Board / Committee at successive meetings or within six months of any previous appearance on the same or similar topic. Deputations may not request that a decision already taken by the Board should be reopened.

10. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 10.1 If any matter arises at a meeting of the Board in which a member of the Board or an employee of Libraries NI or any other person in attendance at the meeting has a personal or business interest or family relationship which may conflict with their responsibility as a Board Member or employee of Libraries NI or which Members of the public might reasonably think could influence that person's judgement in relation to the matter under discussion, he/she shall declare that interest in a manner that cannot be perceived to influence subsequent discussion or decision, and it will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The person in question will leave the room prior to discussion of that matter and will take no part in the discussion or decision-making on that matter.

11. BUSINESS AFFECTING PERSONS EMPLOYED BY LIBRARIES NI

- 11.1 If any question arises at a meeting of the Board as to the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, or as to the conduct, of any person employed by Libraries NI it shall be considered by the Board in committee.

12. CONDUCT OF BOARD MEMBERS

- 12.1 Members of the Board shall be expected to comply at all times with the Code of Practice for Board Members of Libraries NI or any modification to that document.
- 12.2. If at a meeting any Member of the Board misconducts him/herself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Board, the Chairperson will warn the person. If the Member continues to misconduct him/herself, the Chairperson may require that the Member withdraw from the meeting and the meeting may be adjourned for such period as the Chairperson considers expedient.

- 12.3. In the event of a general disturbance which in the opinion of the Chairperson renders the due and orderly despatch of business impossible, the Chairperson may adjourn the meeting of the Board for such period as he/she in their discretion shall consider expedient.

13. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC OR PRESS

- 13.1 The public and press may attend any meeting of the Board of Libraries NI unless specifically excluded for the whole or part of a meeting by a decision of the majority of the Members present.
- 13.2 Members of the public wishing to attend meetings held via an electronic platform must request prior access to do so.
- 13.3 The Board may resolve to exclude the public and press from a meeting whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest either by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or such special reasons as may arise from the nature of the business to be transacted or of the proceedings at the meeting.
- 13.4 The admission of members of the public and press to a meeting of the Board shall be on the understanding that they remain silent, conduct themselves in an orderly manner and do not interrupt the proceedings of the meeting. The number of members of the public and press to be admitted to a meeting will be in compliance with the health and safety regulations applicable to the venue of the meeting.
- 13.5 If a member of the public or press interrupts or disrupts the proceedings at any meeting the Chairperson shall warn the person. If the person continues the interruption or disruption the Chairperson shall order their removal from the meeting. In case of general disturbance, the Chairperson shall order that the public be excluded from the meeting and the meeting may be adjourned for such period as the Chairperson considers expedient.
- 13.6 Taking photographs of proceedings at a Board or committee meeting, the use of any other audio or visual recording equipment during meetings or the recording of meetings held via an electronic platform, is prohibited without the prior permission of the Chairperson of the meeting. Except with the consent of the Chairperson of the meeting, no organisation, Board Member or member of the public shall display banners, posters or signs at meetings.

14. VOTING

- 14.1 Every item or question at a meeting shall be determined by seeking the general assent of voting members or the expression of a wish to proceed to a vote. Every Member of the Board shall have the right to:
- a require that a vote be taken on any matter before the Board;
 - b vote in any debate;
 - c have his /her views recorded in the minutes.

- 14.2 Mode of voting
Votes shall be taken on a show of hands or otherwise as the meeting shall decide.
- 14.3 Recorded votes
A record shall be made of how each Member voted and of abstentions made, provided that a proposal to record votes is made and seconded and receives the support of one third of the Members present at the meeting. Any Member may require that his/her dissent from a decision of the Board or its committees is recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 14.4 Casting vote
A vote shall be determined by the majority of the Members present and voting on the question. An absent Member may not vote by proxy. In this context absence is defined as being absent at the time of the vote. In the event of no majority decision the Chairperson presiding at the meeting shall have a second or casting vote, whether or not he/she has previously voted on the matter.
- 14.5 Voting on appointments
Where more than two persons are nominated for any position to be filled by the Board and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall be repeated until an absolute majority of votes of Members present and voting is given in favour of one person, or where there remains a tie between the remaining two persons, the procedure in 14.4 shall apply.

15. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS

- 15.1 Canvassing of Members of the Board or any committee of the Board directly or indirectly for any appointment under the Board shall disqualify the candidate concerned for that appointment. The purport of this paragraph of the Standing Order shall be included in any form of application.
- 15.2 A Member of the Board shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Board.

16. RECORD OF DISSENT FROM DECISION TAKEN BY THE BOARD

- 16.1 In circumstances where the Chief Executive, in pursuance of his/her duty as accounting officer, is of the view that a decision taken by the Board is contrary to the principles of regularity, propriety or value for money or in contravention of statute and has indicated to the Board that the decision taken by it is contrary to his/her advice, the Chairperson may direct that the Chief Executive's dissent from the decision of the Board shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and that the Chief Executive will refer the matter to the Permanent Secretary of the relevant Department.

17. COMMITTEES

17.1 Board in committee

The Board may at any meeting resolve itself into committee for the purpose of transacting any business on the agenda for that meeting but the public shall not be excluded from the proceedings of the Board in committee except by resolution of the Board.

The Board may resolve to exclude the public and press from a meeting in accordance with paragraph 13.2.

The Board in committee shall not consider any matter not referred to by the resolution resolving the Board into committee.

When the discussion in committee has concluded, the Board shall resolve itself out of committee after which the Chairperson shall make a report to the meeting and the report shall be received without question or discussion.

17.2 Appointment of committees, sub-committees and working groups

The Board shall at its first meeting or as soon thereafter as practicable appoint an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and may appoint at any time such other committees as it considers necessary.

The Board may at any time dissolve a committee or alter its membership. If the Board determines to dissolve the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, it must immediately reconstitute a new one.

The Board may at any time establish ad hoc working groups to deal with specific matters or to enable Members to engage in detailed discussion on matters before formal presentation to the Board, subject to the decisions of such working groups being effective only if ratified by the Board.

17.3 Standing Orders of committees and sub-committees

Unless otherwise provided for in this document, the Standing Orders of the Board shall apply to committees of the Board and sub-committees thereof.

17.4 Quorum at committees and sub-committees

Business shall not be transacted at a meeting of any committee or sub-committee unless a quorum is present.

17.5 Notice and Summons of meetings

Five working days at least before a meeting of the committee the officer servicing the committee shall issue to each Member:

- a a notice convening the meeting, giving its time and place and where the meeting has been called at the request of Members, the notice shall in addition specify the names of those Members;
- b the Agenda for the meeting; and
- c relevant reports and other documents referred to in, or to be read with, the Agenda (however any report or document, a copy of which cannot for good reasons be circulated with the Agenda, may nevertheless be considered at the meeting with the prior approval of the Chairperson).

If due notice of any meeting(s) or any Agenda, or reports or documents referred to in, or to be read with, the Agenda, are not issued to any Member, those omissions shall not affect the validity of the relevant meeting or any subsequent meeting.

- 17.6 Election of committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson
Every committee at its first meeting, before proceeding to any other business, shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson. The position of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall rotate between Councillor Members and independent Members i.e. if the Chairperson is a Councillor, the Vice-Chairperson shall be an independent Member and vice versa.
- 17.7 If the position of Chairperson becomes vacant, the Vice-Chairperson shall be elected as Chairperson
- 17.8 If the Vice-Chairperson's post becomes vacant, the normal election procedure shall be followed, with the position being filled by a Councillor, if the Chairperson is an independent Member and by an independent Member if the Chairperson is a Councillor.
- 17.9 The term of office of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of a committee shall be for a period of two years or until the expiry of their term of appointment as a Board Member, whichever is sooner.
- 17.10 In the absence from a meeting of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, a Chairperson for that meeting shall be elected by the members present. Should a vacancy occur in the office of either Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson it shall be filled by a new election.
- 17.11 Reports and minutes of committees
Each meeting of a committee shall be reported to the Board and the minutes of such meeting of a committee other than the Remuneration Committee shall be circulated with the notice convening the appropriate meeting of the Board. The Chairperson of the Board will report to the Board, in committee, on discussion at the Remuneration Committee, drawing attention to any significant issues that require specific consideration or action by the Board. The minutes of the Remuneration Committee shall be retained in confidence but will be made available on request to Internal Audit and the Northern Ireland Audit Office.
- 17.12 Voting in committees and sub-committees
The mode of voting at a meeting of a committee or sub-committee shall be in accordance with Standing Order 14.
- 17.13 Duties of committees
The duties and responsibilities of each committee shall be determined by the Board and shall be set out in a Scheme of Delegation signed by the Chairperson and Chief Executive. The duties and responsibilities of committees may be altered or amended at any time by resolution of the Board. In so doing the Board shall bear in mind the particular responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

- 17.14 Responsibilities of the Chairperson of a committee
The Chairperson of each committee shall be responsible to the Board for the general direction of the business entrusted to the committee and the Chairperson shall take charge of, or in their absence arrange for, the moving of the adoption of the minutes of the committee at the meeting of the Board to which they are submitted.
- 17.15 Sub-committees
Each committee may appoint sub-committees for specific purposes. A sub-committee shall meet as often as is necessary for the purposes for which it was appointed. Unless the Board decides otherwise the report of a sub-committee, whether appointed under this Standing Order or otherwise, shall be submitted to the parent committee for confirmation prior to being brought before the Board.
- 17.16 Attendance at committee meetings
Any Member of the Board may attend as an observer at meetings of committees or sub-committees to which he / she has not been appointed as a member. If given permission by the Chairperson of the meeting, a Member attending as an observer may speak, but not vote, on any matter.
- 18. COMMON SEAL**
- 18.1 Custody of Common Seal
The Common Seal of the Northern Ireland Library Authority (known as "Libraries NI") shall be kept in a safe place secured by a lock, the keys of which shall be in the custody of the Chief Executive or another officer designated by the Chief Executive for that purpose.
- 18.2 Sealing of documents
The Chief Executive is delegated authority to authorise the use of the Common Seal.
- 18.3 Attestation
The Common Seal shall be attested by the following persons present at the sealing, namely the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson or in their absence the Director of Business Support or the Director of Library Services.
- 18.4 Record of documents sealed
An entry of the sealing of every deed and other document to which the Common Seal shall have been affixed shall be made in the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee at which the affixing of the seal took place and, in circumstances when the Common Seal is affixed otherwise than at a meeting of the Business Support Committee at the next ensuing meeting of the Business Support Committee. A register of all deeds and documents sealed shall also be kept.

19. DUTIES OF MEMBERS IN RELATION TO BOARD WORKS, DOCUMENTS AND OFFICERS

- 19.1 Unless specifically authorised to do so by a decision of the Board, a Member of the Board shall not issue any order to, or make any request of, an officer in respect of any works or duties which are being carried out by, or on behalf of, Libraries NI or claim by virtue of their membership of the Board to have any right to inspect or to enter upon any lands or premises which Libraries NI has the power or duty to inspect or enter.
- 19.2 A Member of the Board may, for the purposes of his/her duty as such Member, but not otherwise, on application to the Chief Executive, inspect any document of a committee or of the Board and if copies are available shall on request be supplied for the like purposes with a copy of such document.
- 19.3 A Member of the Board shall not solely by virtue of such membership have any right to reprimand any officer of the Board in connection with the performance of their duties but shall in the first instance report their comments in writing to the Chief Executive of the Board.

20. MEDIA

- 20.1 The Chairperson and the Chief Executive are the designated media spokespersons for the Board. The Chairperson or Chief Executive may nominate designates authorised to act as spokespersons for the Board within agreed policy positions. All communications on behalf of the Board with the media shall be agreed with the Chairperson or Chief Executive.

21. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 21.1 All agenda reports and other documents and all proceedings of the Board or of a committee thereof shall be treated as confidential unless and until:
- a. the Board or the Chairperson decides otherwise; or
 - b. they become public in the ordinary course of the Board's business; or
 - c. confidentiality is, in all the circumstances, incompatible with any right of access conferred by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

22. EMERGENCY ACTION

- 22.1 Between meetings of the Board the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairperson (or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson) may authorise such action to be taken on behalf of Libraries NI as may be required with respect to matters which are of an urgent nature, provided that all such action must be reported to the Board at its next scheduled meeting.
- 22.2 Action taken pursuant to the powers conferred by this Standing Order may include directing that the Seal be affixed to all such deeds, notices, warrants or other matters as may be required for the transaction of matters which are within the scope of that paragraph.

23. EXCEPTIONS FROM STANDING ORDERS

- 23.1 No exception from any of the provisions of these Standing Orders shall be made otherwise than by direction of the Board. A record of any exception from any of the provisions of these Standing Orders shall be included in the minutes of the Board and the record shall specify the special consideration by which the exception shall have been justified.

24. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 24.1 No Standing Order adopted by the Board shall be suspended at any meeting of the Board or its committees except by the consent of the majority of the Members present.

25. VARIATION AND REVOCATION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 25.1 The Standing Orders for the time being of the Board of Libraries NI or any of them may from time to time be varied or revoked and additional Standing Orders may from time to time be adopted but only with the consent of the majority of the Members of the Board present at each of two consecutive meetings of the Board, the Agenda for which contains due notice of the proposed variation, revocation or addition.

26. STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS

- 26.1 A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member of the Board by the Chief Executive and copies of amendments shall likewise be issued as soon as possible after adoption by the Board.

27. INTERPRETATION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 27.1 The ruling of the Chairperson as to the construction or application of any of the foregoing Standing Orders or as to any proceedings of the Board or committee shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Board or committee.
- 27.2 In the event of any situation arising at a meeting of the Board or its committees not being covered by the Standing Orders, the Chairperson of that meeting shall rule on the procedure to be adopted.

The foregoing Standing Orders were adopted at a meeting of the Northern Ireland Library Authority (known as "Libraries NI") held on 9 September 2021 and shall come into operation with effect from that date and shall supersede all previous Standing Orders.

Sealed with the Common Seal of The Northern Ireland Library Authority (Libraries NI) in the presence of: -



Professor Bernard Cullen
Chairperson

Jim O'Hagan
Chief Executive